

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A culture dish assembly comprising:

a culture dish having a polygonal bottom wall with an outer periphery and a side wall enclosure extending up from said bottom wall and having a top edge remote from said bottom wall, said side wall enclosure including a plurality of substantially planar panels and non-planar corners connecting adjacent panels, said side wall enclosure including a top edge spaced from said bottom wall, said side wall enclosure including a plurality of engagement structures formed on inwardly facing surface regions of said substantially planar panels at locations spaced from said non-planar corners; and

a splash guard having a frame-shaped top wall engaged on said top edge of said side wall enclosure and engagement flanges extending down from said top wall and nesting with portions of said planar panels, said engagement flanges including engagement structures releasably engaged with said engagement structures on said planar panels.

2. The culture dish assembly of Claim 1, wherein said engagement structures comprise engagement structures formed on each of said planar panels of said side wall enclosure.

3. The culture dish assembly of Claim 2, wherein said engagement structures on said side wall enclosure are elongated and define a direction of elongation substantially parallel to said bottom wall of said culture dish.

4. The culture dish assembly of Claim 3, wherein said engagement structures on said side wall enclosure each are substantially rectangular.

5. The culture dish assembly of Claim 4, wherein said engagement structures on said side wall enclosure are projections that project inwardly relative to said side wall enclosure.

6. The culture dish assembly of Claim 5, wherein said engagement structures on said splash guard are recesses dimensioned to closely engage said projections on said planar panels of said culture dish.

7. The culture dish assembly of Claim 1, wherein said bottom wall of said culture dish defines a square with rounded corners.

8. The culture dish assembly of Claim 1, wherein said top wall of said splash guard is substantially parallel to said bottom wall of said culture dish.

9. The culture dish assembly of Claim 8, wherein said top edge of said side wall enclosure defines an outer periphery, said top wall of said splash guard defining an outer periphery substantially registered with said outer periphery of said top edge of said side wall enclosure.

10. The culture dish assembly of Claim 9, wherein said top wall of said splash guard further includes an inner periphery and an inner peripheral lip extending down from said inner periphery of said top wall toward said bottom wall.

11. The splash guard assembly of Claim 9, wherein said top wall includes four corners, one of said corners being substantially concave for defining a pouring opening at said corner.

12. The culture dish assembly of Claim 11, wherein said side wall enclosure tapers outwardly from said bottom wall to said top edge.

13. The culture dish assembly of Claim 12, wherein said engagement flanges of said splash guard having outwardly facing surfaces that taper inwardly at further distances from said top wall of said splash guard.

14. The culture dish assembly of Claim 1, wherein said splash guard includes at least one lift element for facilitating separation of said splash guard from said culture dish.

15. The culture dish of Claim 14, wherein said lift element comprises at least one tab projecting from said top wall and outwardly beyond said side wall enclosure of said culture dish.

16. The culture dish assembly of Claim 15, wherein said tab and said top wall of said splash guard are substantially coplanar.

17. The culture dish assembly of Claim 14, wherein said lift element includes at least one finger slot formed in an inner peripheral edge of said frame-shaped top wall.

18. The culture dish assembly of Claim 1, wherein said frame-shaped top wall of said splash guard includes an inner periphery defining an opening for accessing said bottom wall of said culture dish, said culture dish assembly further comprising a cover removably mountable over said culture dish and said splash guard for at least substantially closing said opening defined by said inner periphery of said frame-shaped top wall of said splash guard.

19. The culture dish assembly of Claim 18, wherein said splash guard further includes a plurality of breathing lugs projecting up from said top wall of said splash guard to permit gas exchange between said culture dish and areas surrounding said culture dish.

20. A culture dish assembly comprising:

a culture dish having a polygonal bottom wall and a side wall enclosure extending up from said bottom wall, said side wall enclosure having a plurality of substantially planar panels and non-planar corners connecting adjacent panels, said side wall enclosure including a top edge spaced from said bottom wall, at least portions of said side wall enclosure flaring outwardly at locations spaced from said bottom wall; and

a splash guard having a frame-shaped top wall, at least a portion of said splash guard being nested in said side wall enclosure of said culture dish at locations spaced upwardly from said bottom wall of said culture dish, at least one lift element being formed on said splash guard to facilitate separation of said splash guard from said culture dish.

21. The culture dish assembly of Claim 20, wherein said frame-shaped top wall of said splash guard includes an inner periphery defining an opening to said splash guard, said lift element including at least one finger slot extending into said inner periphery of said frame-shaped top wall.

22. The culture dish assembly of Claim 20, wherein said lift element includes a pull handle projecting up from said frame-shaped top wall of said splash guard.

23. The culture dish assembly of Claim 22, wherein said pull handle is hingedly connected to said top wall of said splash guard for hinged rotation between an upright orientation where said lift tab projects substantially perpendicularly from said top wall and a prone orientation where said pull handle is substantially adjacent said top wall of said splash guard.

24. The culture dish assembly of Claim 20, wherein said frame-shaped top wall of said splash guard has an outer periphery, said culture dish assembly further comprising an elastomeric gasket mounted around said outer periphery of said frame-shaped top wall for sealing engagement with said side wall enclosure.